RESTORATION REVIEW

Leroy Garrett, Editor

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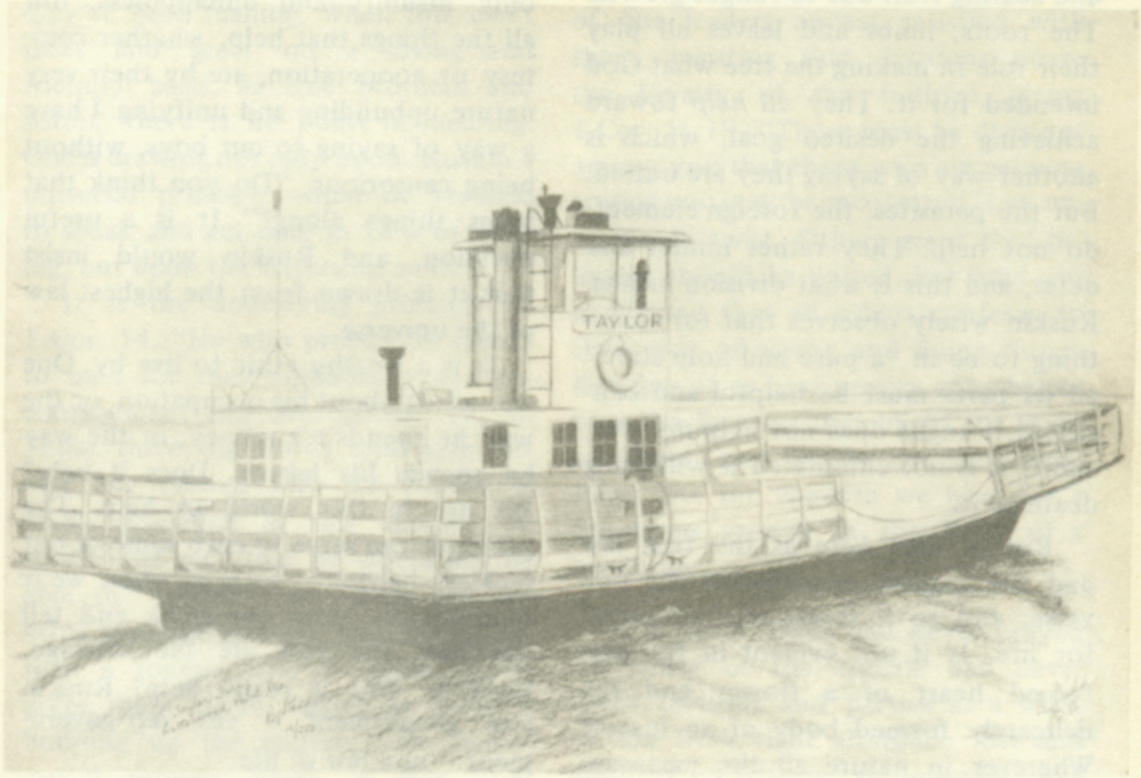

When crew and captain understand each other to the core,
It takes a gale and more than a gale to put their ship ashore.

— *Kipling*

Volume 19, No. 4 **Leroy Garrett, Editor** **April 1977**

Principles of Unity and Fellowship . . .

THE PRINCIPLE OF HELP

A pure and holy state of anything is that in which all its parts are helpful or consistent. The highest and the first law of the universe, and the other name of life is therefore help. The other name of death is separation. Government and cooperation are in all things, and eternally, the laws of life. Anarchy and competition, eternally, and in all things, the laws of death. —John Ruskin in *Ethics of the Dust*

It is a simple and beautiful principle, attested to by all of nature. Outside my study window a pecan tree stands that has trouble growing and bearing fruit due to fungus growth. The roots, limbs and leaves all play their role in making the tree what God intended for it. They all *help* toward achieving the desired goal, which is another way of saying they are united. But the parasites, the foreign element, do not help. They rather hinder and deter, and this is what division means. Ruskin wisely observes that for something to be in "a pure and holy state" all its parts must be helpful and consistent. Fungus does not help my tree, and if it is not eliminated it will bring death to it.

Ruskin sees *help* as the first law and the highest principle of the universe, and so it serves as a synonym for life. Is it not evident in the perfumed heart of a flower and the delicately formed body of an insect? Wherever in nature all the parts are helpful, with each doing its own thing for the good of the whole, there is order, unity and harmony. Whereas the presence of any foreign element, interfering with the proper function of all the parts, brings discord and defect. When something doesn't help it serves to destroy. It is a universal principle of life.

This is especially evident in family life. Whenever a member does anything that does not help the ongoing of the family it is to that extent destructive. Disloyalty does not help. Fiscal prodigality does not help. Quarreling does not help. Laziness does not help. Like the fungus on the tree, these things are destructive and bring only disunity and unhappiness. But all the things that help, whether courtesy or cooperation, are by their very nature upbuilding and unifying. I have a way of saying to our boys, without being censorious, "Do you think that helps things along?" It is a useful question, and Ruskin would insist that it is drawn from the highest law of the universe.

It is a worthy ethic to live by. One can ask it about his occupation, or the way he spends his money, or the way he spends his leisure. Does it help? We are in this world to help. The principle can serve to curb some of our reckless behavior, such as when we're tempted to blow our stack and tell one how the cow ate the cabbage. Hold it. Will it really help? Ruskin sees government - yes, self-government - as a law of life.

He says cooperation is also a law of life. This is evident on the athletic field. Let one member of the team start horsin' around or seeking honors for himself, and the team falls apart. When those who are to work together start competing with each other, it is all she wrote. In Ruskin's terms, we can say that when a player ceases to *help* decay and defeat are the result.

This is why a congregation does not have to have an open split in order to be divided. All the elements at work that do not help make for division. Suspicion, heresy-hunting, gossip, badgering, jealousy, fault-finding are such elements. People are not really one in the Lord when they are afraid of each other - afraid to ask a question or to introduce a new idea or to reveal what they've been reading. When folk can't meet and greet on a loving and friendly basis, as true brothers and sisters, there is no point in meeting. One is drawing not only upon Ruskin's universal principle when he resolves to speak and act only in view of helping, but upon the scriptures as well.

It is the underlying principle of 1 Cor. 14. "He who prophesies speaks to men for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation" (v. 3). Those three big words spell *help. So that the church may be edified is* Paul's guideline in this chapter. In verse 6 he says that he would not be able to "benefit you" if he did not bring something understandable rather than a tongue, and in verse 12 he urges them all to "strive to excel in building up the church." He cannot say it enough. Verse 26 says, "Let all things be done for edification," and verse 30 urges, "so that all may learn and all be encouraged." He goes on to talk about *confusion.* This is a foreign element in the Body, a parasite like the fungus on my tree, and God cannot be the author of confusion but only of peace (v. 33).

We do not usually think of strife, discord, and partyism as immoral, but that is exactly what they are in that they are very wrong and contrary to God's intention for His people. Just as cancer and fungus are "immoral" in the realm of nature. "A pure and holy state of anything is that in which all its parts are helpful and consistent," Ruskin tells us. And so we must rid ourselves of that which is either cancerous or divisive in order to be pure and holy again. We have the surgeon's knife for the one and the peace that is in Jesus for the other.

We have not yet really seen our divisions as wrong and immoral. Some of our leaders appear satisfied with them, insisting that divisions prove the loyalty of the faithful, giving 1 Cor. 11 :19 ("There must be divisions among you that those who are genuine among you may be recognized") an unfortunate twist. Others grant that believers should be united, but hold out a demand that all others conform to their way of seeing and doing things. But few of us have uneasy consciences over the factions that blight the Body of Christ, and we do not show anything like the concern we have for a cancerous growth in the body of a loved one.

It is as if Jesus had never prayed for unity or the apostle had never listed factions and parties as a work of the flesh right alongside lust and adultery. Partyism is immoral like fornication is immoral. This important truth impressed our pioneers, motivating them to launch a movement "to unite the

Christians in all the sects." *Sectarianism is a horrid evil* wrote Thomas Campbell, and, it was his hatred of that sin that caused him to give his life to peace among the churches. We would do well to catch his spirit.

Sin is deceiving as well as destructive. Satan is pleased for us to accept a divided church as a fact of life and to presume that nothing can be done about it. He deceives us into believing that we can be against each other and still be *for* God. He cons us into supposing that a religion that pushes us from each other and keeps us separated can still be a good religion. He doesn't bother to try to deceive me about my pecan tree, for I realize, without any interference from him, that the tree will die if the divisive element is not removed. We accept the lie that the church can be pure and holy and yet fractured into parties. Anything that doesn't help is divisive. Ruskin said it well.

The essence of religion is that it is the bond of kinship and love which binds us together with God. Anything that separates us and puts us in competition with each other is irreligion. Everything about true religion helps!

Paul sees this in the parallel he drew between the human body and the Body of Christ. There are many members in one body, and each part helps in the overall function of the body. "God has so adjusted the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior part, that there may be no discord in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member. is honored, all rejoice together" (1 Cor. 12:24-26). Emphasizing that Jesus must always be the head of the Body, he says that it is from him that "the whole body is joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love" (Eph. 4:16). When every member is helping rather than hurting there is unity.

This helping or upbuilding is in love, and there is no other way. The body is not joined and knit together by unanimity of viewpoint or conformity of opinion. Doctrine *per se* holds nothing together unless it be a faction that is caught up in some pet interpretation. Love by its very nature heals and unites. "Above all, put on love, which binds all together in perfection" (Col. 3:14).

We cannot have lively congregations by practicing the principles of death, to use one of Ruskin's terms again. Competition, separation and anarchy (against the law of love and unity) are the laws of death. Surely we have learned by now that the church can be big and bustling and still be dead. Sardis was dead even when it had a reputation of being very much alive (Rev. 3: 2).

Many a Texas town, not to mention other states, has six or eight struggling denominations meeting in half-filled buildings. Often there are two or three different kinds of Churches of Christ-Christian Churches. Folk who can do business with each other during the week have to go their separate ways on Sunday, and in doing so they sinfully duplicate their efforts and waste resources that should go to

helping suffering humanity. The principle of help says they should seek that oneness of the Spirit, activated by love, so that there will be no discord in the Body. And what a testimonial that would be to any community!

The principle of help has an important pragmatic value in that it points to what any of us can be doing, each in his own way - helping! Ruskin calls it a law of life and a universal principle. It is also a fruit of the Spirit. 1 Cor. 12:28 tells us that God placed helpers in the church. We can all be helpers to the extent that we resolve to help and not to hurt. If each of us will resolve to reach out and accept every child of God as a brother or sister, it will help the Body. If each of us will do nothing factious and seek the things that make for peace, it will help the Body. If each of us will seek to implement that love that is the fruit of the Spirit, especially in a lot of little ways, it will help the Body. And we can all pray for the oneness of the Body like Jesus did. To be a helper and not a hinderer is a great lesson to learn from the scriptures, from nature, and from the universe. *—the Editor*

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THE MALADY OF NOT WANTING

Somewhere in his writings Robert Louis Stevenson refers to "the malady of not wanting," which is an odd statement in a world that obviously wants too much. Surely the malady is greed, not penury. But the context reveals that Stevenson refers to the indifference and passivity toward the higher values that we are inclined to show. We are sick for not wanting the things we ought to want.

Aristotle, the Greek philosopher, believed that man's nature is such that he is eager to learn and to know. A college professor responded to this with, "But Aristotle never taught in an American university!" Many a teacher, harassed by kids who couldn't care less about learning, would wonder how Aristotle or anybody else could make such a statement. But there may be a vast difference between what man is potentially, or what God has created him for, and what he actually is in any given situation. A wrecked car in a ditch is a far cry from what its makers intended or what it was when it rolled off the assembly line. "God made man upright," the scriptures somberly assure us, "but he has devised much evil." Just so, God has made man to be a learner, a questioner, a seeker even if he is often none of these. It is as natural for us to long for inward filling as it is for us to hunger for food for our bodies. Something is wrong when we want the one but not the other. Stevenson says it is a malady, and it may be so contagious as to threaten both the church and the world.

Plato, the master of Aristotle, saw this world as but the shadow of reality, due in part to this malady of not wanting. To him the basic sin is willful ignorance, especially ignorance of self. His famous allegory of the cave points to this basic illness of the human race, not really wanting the truth but only professing to. He sees men shackled to each other in a cave, their understanding of things, including themselves, limited to shadows on the wall. One of them is the exception, for he chooses to

reach beyond his narrow restrictions and discover a larger world. Freeing himself and making his way out of the precipitous cave, which he found both dangerous and painful, he discovers a world he never dreamed existed. He is dazzled by the change and must adjust both his eyes and his thinking to the new situation. He sees what he himself really is as he looks into a mirror of water, and then proceeds to discover the world around him, which illustrates the ancient Greek concept that true wisdom must begin with a knowledge of self. The way Socrates put it: "The unexamined life is not worth living." It is probable that a life lived uncritically is no more worth living in the 1970's than it was back in the fifth century B.C. when Socrates made the statement.

This escape from the cave is sometimes described as "the courage to ascend." The prisoner had the courage to get up and get out even if it was dangerous and difficult. He dared to question, to think, to act, to be different. He found truth to be painful at first, but he adjusted himself to truth rather than truth to himself. Above all was his desire to know, to understand, and he was willing to change.

He also had the courage to descend, to go back into the cave and share his newly found truth with his friends still in bondage. But who was he to teach them? Did they not have the truth already in the flickering shadows upon the wall? At last they rejected him and killed him. Their illness was that they didn't want to know as he wanted to know, and so they turned to violence and persecution rather than change. Plato believed that all those who seek to share truth with those implacable hearts will be treated in some such manner, as was his teacher Socrates.

Do we really want the truth, the truth about ourselves and about the church? It is a sobering question. Our most serious malady may be that we are satisfied and do not want to make any changes. So said Jesus to one church, "Because you say, `I am rich and have need of nothing,' not knowing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind and naked." Those words *not knowing* weighed heavily against them, for they didn't want to know. Still God's mercy lingers. To that same church Jesus says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me" (Rev. 3:20). But only people with their want-to's fixed open the door. The others are afraid of the fresh air!

Let's face it, few of us really want righteousness - the kind that we are to hunger and thirst for, that is. The broken and contrite heart that God desires above all else is all too rare. "You do not want sacrifices, or I would offer them; you are not pleased with burnt offerings. My sacrifice is a humble spirit, O God; you will not reject a humble and repentant heart" (Ps. 52:17). This is the point of religion, not this or that system of externals. Any heart that is not broken before God, ready to make whatever changes He dictates, is to that extent spiritually sick. It is the malady of not wanting God. Such a one may really want the church as he creates it to his own likeness, but not God.

The system in which I grew up sees "the five acts of worship" as the heart of religion, while in fact Ro. 12:1-2 shows that the whole of life is "the reasonable service (or worship)" that we are to offer to God. Thus a church-house centered religion is made the essence of the faith. Worship is made to begin

and end at some "sanctuary" in a building rather than a 24-hour commitment of body and mind to Jesus as the Lord of life. Moreover this system of five acts is the only right system and is the mark of the true church on earth.

This creates such a doctrinal hang-up that the farmer who stays home on Sunday morning to help a cow that is about to drop a calf is described as, and sometimes criticized for, "missing worship." He may have missed the assembly but he didn't miss worship, for he was serving God while showing mercy to a helpless animal, and that is what worship is, serving God.

Like the Pharisees, we have our little parties and systems, and we don't want anyone coming around and criticizing them. We make our own little sect the true church and set all others at naught. If they don't have our name and our way of doing things we cast them out of the kingdom of God. And we are not interested in any suggestion that we change our attitude! This is the malady of not wanting.

Nowhere is this malady as evident as in the ugly history of our continuing divisions. We inherited a divided state of affairs - a movement that was suppose to unite the believers in all the sects - and we cannot be blamed for that. But we seem content for the divisions to continue, and we add a few more parties as we go along. The basic problem has to be that *we really do not want to do anything about it.* We love our parties even while we give lip service to unity.

The tragedy of this malady is that it makes the whole heart sick, turning its victim away from a sincere search for God. "I would have gathered you into my arms," said Jesus as he wept over Jerusalem, "but you would not." God is ready when we are, but apart from a broken and contrite heart man is never ready. We have seen that Ps. 51:17 promises that God will not reject one with a humble and repentant heart even though he be in the church? A proud sectarian has no way of finding God.

There is only one answer to the malady of not wanting, and that is for the heart to be touched by the love of God. As Ro. 5:5 puts it: "This hope does not disappoint us, for God has poured out his love into our hearts by means of the Holy Spirit, who is God's gift to us."

When this happens one can't help but want. —the *Editor*

ON THE BANKS OF THE MISSISSIPPI

If ever you have a chance to visit Caruthersville, Missouri, the queen town of the bootheel, be sure to do so. You would also delight in meeting the disciples that gather at 917 Laurant St. They are what I call a "walk out" church, and I told their story in the November 1973 issue of this journal. It is worth the reading, for it tells of the only case on record of a Church of Christ dissolving itself and then reinstating itself as a congregation on such basis as to get rid of the "liberal" element. Believe it or not, it really did happen. The preacher announced one Sunday morning that the congregation then and there

no longer existed. He then proceeded to reorganize on the basis of a creed called an Affirmation, which all Members had to sign. It included a law against attending sectarian churches and a statement on the sinfulness of the instrument, which he knew the "liberals" would not sign. So they didn't exactly walk out but were kicked out. What else can you expect from the bootheel of Missouri!

After three years they are doing beautifully. Denver Fike, longtime mortician in the town and known far and wide for his exemplary life, has gone home to be with the Lord. He gave much of his life as a leader and builder of the old church, but he was to learn that all that was for naught once he questioned some of the party gimmicks. Newly-installed ministers find ways to dispose of the old soldiers, however noble their service has been, if they dare to step out of line by asking questions one is not supposed to ask. People came far and wide to honor Denver's life, from all sorts of churches, and some of them leaving donations for the new congregation. If he was for it, it must be a good thing, they figured.

They are unquestionably the happiest, eatin'est, kissin'est group you'll ever meet. Odds are far in your favor that you'll get hugged and fed and kissed if you go around them, hugged but not likely bugged. It just shows what gettin' free will do to folk. While they have "The Church of Christ" over the door, they really don't act much like it, being all happy like that.

Hank Allan is their minister to the community, and he is really something else, being about as typical a "Church of Christ" preacher as a trip to the moon is a typical journey. He knows virtually everyone in town and most of them on first name basis. He is president, or soon will be, of both the Kiwanis Club and the Chamber of Commerce. He is as involved in the problems of the town, the churches, and the youth as a man could be. Where else do we have a man who is on call from the police through his C. B. radio? As I rode along with him he explained, while adjusting his radio, that the police sometimes call him in his car if they can't get him at home or at the church building. This is when they have a kid caught up in drugs and they know that old Hank can help out.

Hank knows the drugs and what they'll do to you like a Harlem pusher. In talks to various clubs he tells the parents and citizens of Caruthersville how severe the drug problem is and what they should be doing about it. When he tells some of the preachers around, including some of our own, that they have a drug problem among their youth, they refuse to believe it.

Hank is the kind of a guy who is willing to baptize someone even when he ends up attending some other church. He knows how to relate to youth and he can appropriate the resources that are in Jesus to their needs. When they turn to the Lord, he rejoices, and is eager to immerse them into Christ, whether or not they join his congregation. Sometimes the kids get into real trouble with the hard stuff, and it takes the police and hospital staff and lots of time to pull them out of it. It is a compliment to him that these young people will call him, at any time of day or night, when they or some of their friends are in trouble.

Our brother has a rather simple view of ministry. He believes he should be doing what Jesus did, helping people and teaching people, even if this means an association with the less desirables of society. In judging what is "the work of the church," he concludes that the Body of Christ today should be doing what Jesus did in the days of his flesh. Whatever he did we can do and should be doing, if we are truly his Body. And Hank doesn't suppose that he is to feed people or help them kick the dope habit in order to make members of the Church of Christ out of them.

I recall when the church was thinking of bringing a man in to work with them. They wanted a minister for the community, not one who would say sermons to them. The Lord really blessed them with the right man. The Sunday I was there he passed out copies of his worksheet, a report on his activities for the week, which showed a work week of 57 hours. It provided an opportunity for me to remind them that they too should be clocking some hours for the Lord. The man they support might rightly be expected to do more than they, but they most certainly should find some time to minister to folk as he is doing, if but a few hours a week.

The townspeople who are acquainted with the way Church of Christ preachers usually stand aloof of civic and religious affairs can hardly believe that old Hank is for real. He is part of the ministerial association and speaks now and again at various churches on special occasions. They see him as an odd sort of Church of Christ minister, but they love every minute of it and love him along with it. But he really drives other "gospel preachers" in the area up the wall with all those strange things he does. If they were all like Hank, I don't think we'd have to bother about the pastor system.

The ferry boat era has passed in Caruthersville and nearby Cottonwood, where our brother Eric Taylor has been "a river rat" for 50 years. A new, 27-million dollar bridge now connects Caruthersville to Dyersburg, Tenn., so they recently made the last ferry boat run, most on board were there for sentimental reasons. A local artist did a sketch of the ferry which made the papers here and there, announcing the end of an era (see front cover). One afternoon Eric and I went down to where his ferries are docked and walked upon them, recalling 50 years on the river. He told me that during the 1937 flood he took his ferry off the Mississippi and went out across the countryside and down a major highway rescuing people who were marooned by high water. He also recalled the time he bore President Truman and his party across the river. But the boats are for sale now. It is all over.

It reminded us that bridgebuilding changes things, especially those bridges that we build for Jesus, from one brother to another brother. There are Tennessee folk who seldom if ever came over to Missouri and vice-versa, for there was no bridge and the ferry cost time and money. Now they dash to and from freely. So it is with Jesus' divided people. Love, peace and joy build bridges. Isolation, suspicion and resentment keep us separated. But those who build bridges sometimes cause problems. It not only stops the ferry traffic but it may well put parties out of business as well. — *the Editor*

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SONS OF HAGAR

This paragraph from a letter, written by a sister in west Texas, will serve as a point of departure for a few observations that may prove helpful. Since we are not interested in making this personal, we will omit the names of the parties involved.

> _____ was holding a meeting where we worship here. He took 2 Tim. 2:16-17 and compared you and Carl (Ketcherside) to the two fellows in that scripture who had erred from the truth. We could not believe that he would actually call your names like that! Then, as an added insult, brother _____ (the resident minister) amened him in a loud voice. Well, I'm afraid 1 did not pray as you did for the Father to forgive them, as when the brother from Tennessee called you a false teacher. After the service I told them they were guilty of slander and had caused many innocent people to be afraid to read your wonderful articles. They said they hoped so! We didn't know that our so-called sound brethren would be so hard and cold toward us.

While this sort of thing is understandably upsetting to such a sincere person as this sister, she must realize that all this is the result of recognized laws of behavior that God Himself revealed to us. It is not going too far to say that we have no grounds for supposing it could be otherwise. The Hindus call it the law of karma or the law of sowing and reaping, and the principle is most dramatically set forth in scripture. When the carnal man is in control, his works cannot be other than of the flesh. He may give lip service to spiritual values, but he is only using them to his own selfish ends. Paul takes this principle even further in Gal. 4 when he relates it to persecution.

"As at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so it is now," says the apostle in Gal. 4:29. The sons of Hagar will maltreat the sons of Sarah because Hagar's children are of the flesh and Sarah's of the Spirit. By its very nature the carnal seeks to destroy the spiritual, and we cannot expect it to be otherwise. We can only work and pray for the transformation of the carnal mind. But carnality itself will not change its character, and wherever it manifests itself it will bear such works as Paul outlines in Gal. 5:19-2 I , one of which is partyism. Since the party mind cannot bear the presence of one who is free in Jesus, he must do whatever he can to discredit and destroy.

One would suppose that in a situation such as the sister describes the two preachers could be forbearing, thankful that someone else is having influence in people's lives that may well prove to be a blessing, and thus leave the likes of Ketcherside and Garrett to whatever end their teaching will lead. Ordinary human dignity and courtesy would so dictate. The drill sergeant down at the armory would show that kind of manners to such folk. But this they cannot do. The answer is simple: *the flesh.* Rudeness is the work of the carnal mind. And this applies to us all, whenever we allow ourselves to be dictated to by carnality. One in whom God's Spirit dwells may behave in such a carnal way, but in doing so the Spirit's influence is wrested and he is now walking according to the flesh.

In the case of Hagar's children the situation gets more serious, for her spiritual offspring cannot simply be indifferent, or show common courtesy if not brotherly love, as the drill sergeant might do. Hagar's children are in the family of God, and they have such resentment for their brothers and sisters who choose to be free in Sarah, that they cannot even be as courteous as people of the world. No one is as vicious as the child of God who chooses to be the spiritual heir of Hagar. One is much safer in the hands of the Mafia! Place me at the mercy of a hardboiled school superintendent who knows the way of the world rather than in the hands of an elder or preacher who is an offspring of her who "bears children for slavery."

Hagar is Mount Sinai and Mount Sinai is the law. The law in turn is enslaving, for its purpose is to remind man of his sin "until Shiloh come." It is not the old Jerusalem, Paul tells us in the allegory, that is our mother, but the Jerusalem that is above, and it is she that sets us free. That is why we are to rejoice. Jesus frees us from law-keeping, whether Mosaic law-keeping or Church of Christ law-keeping. "We, brethren, like Isaac, are children of promise," he says, not brothers-in-law! If this much of the allegory is clear, the next verse should be: "But as at that time he (Ishmael) who was born according to the flesh persecuted him (Isaac) who was born according to the Spirit, so *it is now."* Both sets of children are in the church but only one set is free. The Hagars among us are always going to be persecuting the Isaacs among us. Some of us have at one time or another been heirs of *both* women, having once persecuted the very ones we cherish as brothers and sisters in Christ.

This must be what Paul means in the conclusion of his allegory: "Cast out the slave and her son; for the son of the slave shall not inherit with the son of the free woman." That is to say, *don't be a slave to any system or party but free in Jesus.* This is a demon that we can all cast out of ourselves, the demon of legalism, sectarianism, and self-righteousness, by an appeal to the liberty that we have in Jesus. This is how we become children of promise, children of the Jerusalem that is above. So how do we behave in the church? It all depends on who our mother is! Thank God that we can switch mothers!

When I was a student preacher some of my teachers were, I fear, sons of Hagar, and I was a long time overcoming this influence of the flesh not to say that I am completely liberated even now. I was taught that premillennialists in the church were not OK; they had evil designs upon the church. R. H. Boll was the recognized leader among them, and I recall distinctly the first time I saw him. I did *not* love him, though I would have professed such no doubt. Being a child of Hagar, that is how I acted. I called his name, branding and castigating him - all in the name of the sound doctrine I had learned at the Church of Christ college - and in all probability comparing him to Hymenaeus and Philetus, as our brothers in west Texas did with Carl and me.

How sorry I am that I ever behaved in such a way to one who was so obviously a dear brother with a deep commitment to the Lord. I have since learned that he had very grievous personal problems that were beyond his control that caused him to despair of life itself. And yet most of his brothers were

cruel to him because of a doctrinal difference. I was actually taught to make fun of the brother for the way he prayed - getting caught on his knees *with the door ajar!* God, have mercy on us for such insensitivity!

I am thankful that I was able to be with brother Boll again, years later. Something had happened to me in the meantime. I still was not a premill, but that was beside the point. I could claim him as my brother and show my love for him. I wish I had had the maturity to apologize forthrightly as I would now if he were still with us. But that wasn't necessary. As a son of the free woman he understood, and he loved me when I was in the dry as much as when I was in the green.

And so it is with our brothers referred to in the letter. While they are not mere boys and should be farther along than they are, I love them just the same, and I understand. There is no problem, except the one they have. They have the wrong mother. That is what happened to me in the way I treated brother Boll (and a lot of others!) I cast out the bond woman. I changed mothers and now I'm free of all that stuff that causes good men to act little. *—the Editor*

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Pilgrimage of Joy . . .

THE PARTY AND ITS RINGLEADERS

W. Carl Ketcherside

I sometimes wish I could omit this chapter but to do so would leave a void and create a distorted picture. I will deal with a division and my part in it, although division in the family of God has come to be so abhorrent to me I would like to forget my own unfortunate participation in it. In order to explain what happened I must give you a good deal of background. I do so with the realization it may not make sense to you. If you are patient enough to read it, however, you may be enabled to envision the role of personalities and their political maneuverings in the frightfully-divided Churches of Christ.

Although I did not realize it at the time I was baptized, this historical movement was already fractured into fragments because of the legalistic concept which had captured the minds of its adherents. Divisions do not happen. They are caused. Parties form around men who promote the separation and insist upon the segregation of their adherents. In the movement growing out of the ideal of restoration as enunciated by Thomas and Alexander Campbell, most of the divisions centered around men of prominence. In almost every instance they were editors of journals. They could use their papers as propaganda media and the United States mails as a distribution method. No party could long endure without an editor and a "loyal" paper.

Isaac Errett wielded influence through *Christian Standard* David Lipscomb edited *Gospel Advocate.* Austin McGary edited *Firm Foundation.* Daniel Sommer edited *American Christian Review.* The name of this paper was changed at various times to *Octographic Review, Apostolic Review,* and back again to *American Christian Review.* It was into the segment of "the disciple brotherhood" represented by the *Apostolic Review* I was introduced when baptized. At the time I did not know there were others. I supposed, in my childhood idealism, that all Christians were together, united in a common bond of faith, and that wherever you saw a meetinghouse with "Church of Christ" over the door you would find a welcome and a hand of fellowship to cheer you.

Daniel Sommer was a unique personality. Born of German immigrant parents, on January 1 I , 1850, he lived for ninety years, and formed a human bridge between the early restoration pioneers and my own time. He was contemporary with Alexander Campbell for sixteen years, and entered Bethany College four years after the death of its founder. A rather slow, but methodical student, he resolved to master the content of divine revelation and to proclaim it "without fear or favor." He viewed the spirit of departure from the original design of the scriptures as a sad and doleful commentary on the influence of pride and ambition among the disciples of Christ and began to raise his voice against the innovations he felt would make impossible the "return to the primitive order of things."

By the time he was forty years of age he was wielding a trenchant pen and a vigorous voice against the employment of "unlawful methods resorted to in order to raise money for religious purposes." He decried such things as bake sales, rummage sales, plays, performances and festivals. He attacked select choirs, instrumental music, missionary societies, and the "One man imported preacher-pastor to take the oversight of the church." It was his opposition to the developing clergy system which crystallized his objection to what he referred to as "so-called Christian colleges." Since David Lipscomb College and Abilene Christian College were both liberal arts schools, teaching nine-tenths secular subjects and one-tenth Bible, he deplored the designation Christian and coined the term "religio-secular institutions" to describe them.

I have in my possession a yellowed sheet listing exactly a hundred errors of the "new digressives" as he labeled defenders of the colleges to distinguish them from the "old digressives" who endorsed instrumental music and missionary societies. But I think his main objection lay in the charge that the colleges were "preacher factories," taking "beardless youths" whose chief claim to fame was "a gift of gab" and who, after receiving a certain amount of polish and a degree, could hire themselves out by the year to minister to churches for a set fee. He believed such a system would make the churches dependent upon hirelings, and instead of developing a well-trained militia, would so weaken the saints they would have to secure mercenaries to defend them against assaults of the enemy.

So formidable was his attack that before 1890 it was decided to "call the hand" of "the digressives" and fling down the gauntlet. The place chosen was the Sand Creek meeting-house, a rural setting but a few miles from Windsor, Illinois. Here each year huge audiences gathered for a home-coming. A

special train ran from Chicago, picking up people en route. Several thousand gathered for the famous weekend. On August 17, 1889 Daniel Sommer stood up to read a document he had written. He called it "An Address and Declaration" which was a take-off on "The Declaration and Address" of Thomas Campbell penned exactly eighty years before.

It was a protest against "objectionable and unauthorized things taught and practiced in many congregations. It listed four specific "corrupt practices." Instrumental music was not one of them. The thesis closed with these words: "All such that are guilty of teaching, or allowing and practicing the many innovations and corruptions to which we have referred, and after being admonished, and having had sufficient time for reflection, if they do not turn away from such abominations, that we cannot and will not regard them as brethren."

From now on the die was cast. Although the missionary society had been organized fifty years before, and instrumental music introduced forty years before, for the first time they became an open and formal test of fellowship. Representatives from five congregations affixed their signatures, not realizing that in so doing they were formulating a creed by which brother-

hood was to be reckoned. A rash of court suits broke out to secure the property and in many of these Brother Sommer was called to act as a witness and testify against what he called "modern schoolmen."

Hardly had some degree of calm been restored by mutual exclusiveness deplored the use of the instrument were plunged into another bitter contest. This time the point of contention was "the religio-secular college." The Western Bible and Literary College had been planted at Odessa, Missouri and since there was strong opposition to it by many congregations in the area two debates were arranged between B. F. Rhodes and Daniel Sommer. These were held at Odessa and Hale, Missouri. As a result, J. N. Armstrong, who was president of the school, challenged Brother Sommer to a written examination of the issue.

Twenty essays were presented by each writer in a debate which began on March 15, 1907 and carried over into the year I was born. The written discussion was marked with bitterness and interspersed with accusations and counter-accusations. On page 299, Brother Sommer wrote: "About six years ago I began, with much reluctance, to oppose a certain class of colleges, for they had been projected by men whom I supposed to be my brethren. But I have tested six of them, and have proved them to be reckless of truth, on the college question, and slanderers of me personally. As a result I cannot regard them as brethren, and do not so designate them except through force of habit in form of expression."

In closing his part of the discussion, Brother Armstrong said: "He is trying to divide a people who are as nearly one in doctrine and practice as it is possible for true, loyal hearts to be; a people who are one on every question in religion save in their misunderstandings of the teachings of Christ . . . Could

he do it, brother Sommer would lead the Octographic Review readers, a small company compared to the great body of disciples that advocate the schools, to reject as Christians this body of disciples, notwithstanding it stands with the Octographic Review family on nearly every other question discussed in the Church of God. Following such a principle every preacher in the Church would build up his individual sect."

At the time I was convinced that "the Octographic Review family" was the body of Christ to the exclusion of all others. There were real problems. Any party dominated by a strong personality, regardless of the sincerity of that person, treads a narrow line and walks on thin ice. The publishers of the *Apostolic Review* could wield a powerful influence on men and congregations and did so. Division is a natural result of such an arrangement. In Long Beach, California men who were powerful preachers came under suspicion — A. M. Morris, W. P. Reedy, Ralph C. Yadon, Stephen and Silas Settle. Charges were preferred and a disgraceful scene enacted in the Long Beach meetinghouse where rival factions held meetings simultaneously and tried to "sing each other down."

The "brethren out west" as they came to be known, started their own paper, a rival journal to "the Review," and those who supported the latter regarded the other as traitors. They were referred to as "the Long Beach element" or "the Morris faction." The charge against them was that they had "gone soft on the pastor system" and were hiring preachers at a stipulated salary to take over the pulpits. Men who had been regarded as "faithful" for years were suddenly branded and no longer called for meetings.

To complicate matters further, trouble began to surface in the Sommer family, not a new thing. Because one could not get a "clergy certificate" for reduced fares on the railroads if he derived part of his income from the sale of books or from editing a paper, Daniel Sommer placed the editorship of the paper in the hands of his wife. Her name appeared on the masthead for years — Mrs. K. W. Sommer, Editor. She did not take her position lightly and when her husband became involved in a church trouble in the west she cut him out of the paper and refused to print his articles. "There was no small stir," as the inspired writer would phrase it.

Even before that occurred, D. Austen, a son who resented having been left off of the family editorial staff, started his own paper which he designated the *Macedonian Call*. In it he frequently slanted articles at the *Review* and when his mother died, and his two brothers and one sister (Chester, Allen and Bessie) took over, he increased his attacks. Because he was traveling much of the time as a preacher he found an opportunity to sow the seeds of doubt about the moral, spiritual and scriptural soundness of his brothers, and a great many long-time readers became suspicious. They watched the paper carefully for indications of a trend away from the traditional views. In 1932 they thought they had found such indications.

The June 21, I 932 issue carried an article simply signed "Review Publishers" and entitled "Can't We Agree on Something?" It began with the words, "To those of the Churches of Christ who desire a plan for Unity, we submit the following for your consideration." Fifteen points which had been controversial were discussed. The document proposed that colleges, orphan homes, and societies be disassociated from congregational relationships and maintained by individuals. "The church Contribution is not for that purpose." It suggested that the "Church Contribution" be used for "spreading the Gospel and taking care of the poor."

Each congregation would decide for itself how much preaching or mutual edification it would have. Bible classes were not to be organized into separate departments, and those who opposed them could stay away from them without censure. Actually, the statement was somewhat innocuous and tame when looked at in retrospect, but it became explosive in the atmosphere in which it was launched. No sooner did it hit the mail than D. Austen Sommer zeroed in upon it and called for all "loyalists" to rally round the flag to do or die for the cause we loved.

Although the publishers of the *Review* replied to the attack by saying it was simply a rough draft of suggestions intended to encourage a re-study of our divided state with a hope of alleviating it, the opposers (of whom I was one of the most vocal) labeled it a written creed. The description of it by the publishers gave us a handle and we called it "The Rough Draft" and this made it possible to identify the supporters and the denouncers of it. Daniel Sommer disclaimed any knowledge of the composition of the document but came to its defence when he became aware of the rabid opposition.

His intervention did not help. D. Austen Sommer said his father was in his dotage and had become soft on the issues because of his age. He pointed out that Alexander Campbell had done the same thing with the missionary society, but Daniel reminded everyone that when Campbell embraced the society he was the same age as D. Austen. Everywhere there were cries that the Review had betrayed the church and "let down the bars so the college preachers could come in and wreck everything, including the faith."

I was twenty-four years old when the storm broke and in my partisan enthusiasm was the one who accepted the challenge of the 82 year old Daniel to debate the issue. Fortunately, the debate did not materialize, but in our correspondence he expressed his sadness that I manifested so much zeal with so little knowledge. He also told me he had hoped his mantle would fall on my shoulders, and that he had earlier thought of Austen as his successor, but was disappointed that he had proven himself to be "a splinter of the butt-cut of humanity."

The situation of the Sommer family became more intense. All communication between D. Austen and the others broke down. Meanwhile the cry was raised among us to force every preacher to take a stand on the "Rough Draft" and to publicly declare himself. In many articles the quotation appeared,

"Mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which you have learned." In others we were reminded, "If any man come and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, and neither bid him Godspeed."

With such a spirit rampant among us, division became inevitable. Separation was regarded as the will of God. Maintenance of purity of doctrine by segregation from the compromisers was urged upon every side. The agitation for a mass meeting to be held in a central location to deal with the question became almost universal. There were no doubt some cool heads who cautioned care but they were in the minority and they were shouted down. We wanted action. It was time to show your colors, to put up or shut up! The day for deliberation was past. I think I was one of the ringleaders and I stayed in the thick of the *fray* by letters and articles. Parties must have "issues" to survive and in the absence of real ones they create their own!

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DOWN HOME

One of the most satisfying meetings in which I have engaged recently was the one held under the direction of Central Church of Christ, Irving, Texas. The brethren completely transcended the party spirit and made fellowship come alive. It was a privilege to see Leroy and Ouida again. I spoke three nights on unity and fellowship to excellent audiences, and also appeared before a number of special groups. A half day was spent at Dallas Christian College where we had a great open forum. David Reagan, Ron Durham and Truman Spring, Jr., labor with the saints at Irving and are doing a masterful job . . . on March 17 it was my privilege to be the speaker at a District Women's Meeting in Saint Louis. It was a great season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord . . . We are pleased at the response to my latest book, the revised edition of *The Twisted Scriptures* which deals with the wresting of God's Word to justify division in the divine family. A number of those who have read it have ordered additional copies for distribution to friends and brethren. The cost of the book is $3.25 . . . We would like to have advance orders for my next book "Talks to Jews and Non-Jews" which is scheduled to be released by Standard Press, about mid-June. 'The cost will be $4.95 and this includes postage to your address . . . I have again reprinted *The Authority Totem,* an 8-page treatise on the ridiculous position in which our divisions have placed us. This is the fourth edition. The publication will be sent to you at the rate of ten for one dollar, and when you read it, you'll hardly know whether to laugh or cry . . . All of the lectures given at Oak Hill Chapel on the Revelation letter in conjunction with Old Testament prophecy are now on tape and may be secured for $3.00 for one to five cassettes, or six for $1 5.00. You must order them from T. N. Ratliff, 9729 Calumet Drive, Saint Louis, Missouri 63137. As a starter

I suggest you send him $3.00 and ask for the tape entitled "The Mark of the Beast." If you do not agree with my thinking I will love you anyhow . . . Nell and I are still sending a free copy of my book *The Death of the Custodian* to any college or university student who makes a personal request for it. The address will be found at the bottom of this column. The book is $2.95 per copy to all others . . . June 3,4 I will be at the Cavalier Men's Retreat at Mechanicsville, near Richmond, Virginia . . . July 27-29 1 will be at Arkansas City, Kansas, where the saints are celebrating their twentieth anniversary as a congregation of free men and women. Leroy is to be there and I shall enjoy being with him . . . August 11, I will be speaking at the Southern Christian Youth Convention at Winston-Salem, North Carolina . . . August 26, 27 will find me at Western Buckeye "Camp Christian" near Houston, Ohio . . . September 2,3,4, I will be speaking at the Labor Day Family Camp held at Camp Winema, Oregon. Later I will tell you of other meetings this year in Canada and several states, but I want to mention to saints in California that I am scheduled to be at Escondido, January 8 - 11. It will be a real blessing to me to see brethren at all of these gatherings. —*W. Carl Ketcherside, 139 Signal Hill Drive, Saint Louis, Missouri 63121.*

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Monthly Musing . . .

THEN AND NOW

Robert Meyers

One of the most delightful and poignant books a person with a Church of Christ background can read is Edmund Gosse's 19th century *Father and Son*, the true story of a boy's strict religious training by a father who clung tenaciously to extreme literalism in interpretation of the Bible.

Young Gosse's father and mother were in almost total agreement religiously. He explains it in words that will ring a familiar bell for some who read this: "So far as the sects agreed with my Father and my Mother, the sects were walking in the light; wherever they differed from them, they had slipped more or less definitely into a penumbra of their own making, a darkness into which neither of my parents would follow them.

"Hence, by a process of selection, my Father and my Mother alike had gradually, without violence, found themselves shut outside all Protestant communions, and at last they met only with a few extreme Calvinists like themselves, on terms of what may almost be called negation — with no priest, no ritual, no festivals, no ornament of any kind, nothing but the Lord's Supper and the exposition of Holy Scripture drawing these austere spirits into any sort of cohesion. They called themselves 'the Brethren,' simply: a title enlarged by the world outside into 'Plymouth Brethren.'"

How like the childhood of many of us this is. If the other religious folk agreed with us in any matter, on that point they walked in the light. If they differed, they were in darkness. By such a process, the walls contract upon a mighty small Brotherhood at last. To one within it, of course, it seems large, just as one's little home town seems a place of infinite space until he goes away into the wide world and then returns one day to discover how cramped and narrow it is.

To make the analogy between Gosse's world and my own even closer, I recall that we were always annoyed when the naughty unknowing chose to enlarge our simple designation of ourselves as 'Christians' to 'Church of Christ Christians' or, worse, 'Campbellites.'

But we had that same marvelous assurance that young Gosse's parents had. No matter that the Methodists and Baptists and Presbyterians might number some of the "finest" people in town. No matter that they had in their numbers doctors, teachers, lawyers and bankers — all with more formal education than even our elders had — they were still in hopeless error and doomed to flames.

Why *we* should have been the Elect, the only Chosen of God to read the Word infallibly, we did not bother to ponder. We just accepted that happy fact and felt, some of us at least, more than a little smug as we walked past those handsome edifices of error.

Like young Gosse, I learned that my elders did not always speak the truth to me. He once asked his father very carefully about what God would do if he bowed down to an idol. His father assured him that God would be very angry, and would signify that anger, if one in a Christian country bowed down to wood and stone. Inevitably, young Gosse decided to put that to the test. He prayed to a chair as if it were God, and he waited.

"God would certainly exhibit his anger is some terrible form, and would chastise my impious and wilful action. I was very much alarmed, but still more excited; I breathed the high, sharp air of defiance. But nothing happened; there was not a cloud in the sky, not an unusual sound in the street. Presently I was quite sure that nothing would happen. I had committed idolatry, flagrantly, and deliberately, and God did not care.

"The result of this ridiculous act was not to make me question the existence and power of God; those were forces which I did not dream of ignoring. But what it did was to lessen still further my confidence in my Father's knowledge of the Divine mind. My Father had said, positively, that if I worshipped a thing made of wood, God would manifest his anger. I had then worshipped a chair, made (or partly made) of wood, and God had made no sign whatever. My father, therefore, was not really acquainted with the Divine practice in cases of idolatry."

It is hardly necessary to remind ourselves how often our Sunday School teachers, our pulpiteers, and our parents made casual, extravagant statements to children about what God would do in certain circumstances, only to be found out by those same sharp-witted children when they discovered that

God does not operate at all in the ways claimed for Him. When a child asks about God, and about the will and practices of God, adults had best take time to make a careful and exceedingly honest answer. If they don't, faith in God may go swooshing down the drain along with faith in Papa.

Gosse writes tenderly of his father's faith, though it ceased to nourish him when he became himself an adult. He recalls certain old hymns which he could not repeat in his adult years without the most poignant emotions, even though he had come to disbelieve and even dislike their imagery and melody.

I suppose many who read this have felt the same. There are moments when I hear some group singing one of the old "Invitation" songs like "Why Not Tonight?" or "Jesus is Calling" or "Just As I Am," and find that my heart has grown full and my eyes cloudy with the memories of those far-off times when I stood beside my mother and father, my hand in one of theirs, singing lustily away.

I know quite as well as Thomas Wolfe that one cannot go home again, that there is no turning back on the long, long adventure of the human spirit. But occasionally a snatch of some old melody, a phrase floating by out of my past, a memory of all the patterns that shaped my childhood years — and I am undone by nostalgia.

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Monthly Musing . . .

WHEN THE VICTIMS RISE

Robert Meyers

Our penchant for ignoring the lessons of history makes us forget countless examples of the inexorable law of reaction. It has been shown a thousand times that any greatly repressive regime gives birth to a reaction which outdoes its parent in tyranny and extremism.

A prime example is that 17th century swing from rigidity to license. In the time of Charles I almost every English intellectual had fun mocking the straight-laced Puritans who named their children out of the Bible and who damned relentlessly anyone who ate sweets on a holy day.

But by and by, when the victims of this mockery came to power themselves, they did precisely what we should have expected them to do. They retaliated by closing the playhouses, beating the actors, censoring writings, changing the college curriculums, and requiring candidates for honors or jobs to tell exactly how and when they had experienced the requisite "new birth."

Like the extremism which provoked their violent reaction, theirs bred its own defeat and provoked another one. Charles II returned from France with his riotous court and men who had been compelled to live austere lives threw off their manacles with a wild glee.

Now, everything the Puritan had preached as sacred was insulted daily. His piously arranged features were mocked, and with faces of brazen impudence his risen enemy flaunted deeds which were certain to horrify him. Because the Puritan had been inhumanly severe on illicit love, the vengeful liberated made a joke of purity and marital fidelity. Because the Puritan had seldom opened his mouth in public without quoting Scripture, the rebels seldom opened theirs without speaking bawdy.

One need not go to the 17th century, of course, for illustrations of the principle. Our Catholic friends have found in recent years how galled were many of their priests under the authoritarian tyranny of their church. When Pope John opened the window many of them promptly gulped the sweet fresh air of unfamiliar freedom and then insisted upon discussing openly a whole houseful of irritants.

When I remember these things I cannot help wondering how long the Churches of Christ will submit to a tyranny of preachers and journal editors who tell them which men are sound and which are not, which interpretations they may hold and which they must discard. As I continue to hear stories of faculty members harried or fired because of the pressures of an insecure orthodoxy, and of preachers dismissed from their pulpits at the insistence of other preachers who decided they were unsound, I wonder if we may not be sowing the seeds of a reaction which will one day dismay us with its emotional excess.

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THE MUSIC CONTROVERSY

During a recent lectureship at Abilene one of the professors presented a paper on the case for acappella singing in public worship. I dropped the brother a note to suggest that the topic was quite beside the point, for no one questions that there is a case for congregational singing without an instrument. The issue he should deal with, I suggested, is whether there is a case for making acappella music a test of fellowship. No one is going to quarrel with us for choosing to be non-instrumental, or even for concluding that it would be wrong for us not to be. The problem comes when we insist that everyone else must see it our way and when we make sinners of all those who use the instrument.

Another of our professors, this one serving at David Lipscomb College, wrote in the *Gospel Advocate* to the effect that our young people should not be ashamed that we do not have instrumental music in our churches. It seems that some of them were being apologetic over its absence within their peer group, and he was assuring them that their case was such that they need not apologize. While I can't imagine many of our youth being that much concerned about instrumental music *pro* or *con* in a world with so many real problems, I must again insist that the professor is not touching the real issue. Shall we go on teaching our youth that other Christians are sinning and are under the threat of damnation for having the instrument? True, they should not be ashamed of being acappella, but that is

not the whole story. Should they be ashamed because we do not accept our brothers in other churches as within the fellowship of Christ because *they* use an organ? I say *yes*, we should all be ashamed of that, and a short review of the history of this controversy should help to bring this into focus.

One thing is certain. There could be no controversy over instruments in worship until instruments were available on the far-flung American frontier where our Movement had its birth and early growth, and this was not until around 1850-60. Since Alexander Campbell died in 1866 he was not around to share in the controversy, and he said almost nothing on the subject. There is his statement to the effect that an organ would be to the believer in worship like a cowbell in a symphony and yet another quote to the effect that piety consecrated the harp and the organ to the praise of God. The second-generation leadership also had a divided opinion, with some of them, like the stalwart John F. Rowe, not knowing what to say. He stated that he did not object to *a good* instrument, but that surely those that grunted and wheezed were unscriptural!

J. W. McGarvey in 1864 was the first to argue seriously against the instrument on scriptural grounds. Since the instrument is not explicitly authorized it is without divine authority. This argument from the silence of scripture has continued to be the position of the anti-instrument churches to this day. McGarvey was reminded that the Bible is not all that silent, and so he was asked to explain how instruments could be so wrong since they are referred to both in the Old Testament and are a part of heavenly glory. McGarvey replied that angels and saints in glory may be granted favors not available to men in the flesh. But McGarvey was irenic in his views and there is no evidence that he advocated making the issue a test of fellowship. He cast his lot with a non-instrument church but always considered himself a Disciple of Christ. He favored the missionary society, which was another issue that finally led to the separation of Churches of Christ.

So far as we can determine Moses F. Lard, one of our sons of thunder, was the first to make the instrument a test of fellowship or threaten to. In his *Quarterly* in 1864 he insisted that brethren should stay away from church rather than to attend where there is an organ. If an organ were introduced, he advised the faithful ones to withdraw.

C. L. Loos, a colleague to Campbell and perhaps the most scholarly of the second generation leaders, studied the matter with some care. He doubted if there should he any music other than the human voice, except perhaps trumpets such as blared forth from Solomon's temple! We assume he was serious.

David Lipscomb, editor of the *Gospel Advocate* and "bishop of the South," if we had bishops, was unequivocally opposed to the instrument. He did not however make it a test of fellowship, not for a long time at least. When "pro-organ" preachers came to Nashville, he would go to hear them, and he advised the churches to draw no lines on this issue. He was strongly opposed to any move that would lead to division. After upwards of a generation of this kind of forbearance, he at last surrendered this position and shared in the separation of Churches of Christ.

Benjamin Franklin was also strongly anti-organ but just as strongly pro-unity. He advised the non-instrumentalists to meet separately in the same building and sing only acappella but not to organize a new congregation or create a split. Isaac Errett, first editor of the *Christian Standard,* favored the instrument for sonic churches, but he insisted that none should be introduced if there was even a small minority that objected. His advice was not generally heeded.

There are some amusing stories along the way. It is told for a fact that a sister in San Marcos, Texas stole into the building where an organ had been imported and blasted it into Kingdom Come with a hatchet. And where else for an organ except Kingdom Come?

The church in St. Louis bought a building that had an organ already in it, but it was kept locked and unused. The "organ element" became dissatisfied and withdrew so as to start a church of their own in a nearby hall, where there was no organ. So the anti-organ group had an organ but would not use it while the pro-organ group had no organ!

In 1887 in a Springfield, Mo. church pandemonium broke out when the pro-organ and anti-organ factions tried to sing each other down. The preacher sought to restore peace by way of a smooth talk, but a lively hymn by the organ group soon silenced him. I was such a furor as to make the columns of the local newspaper.

While we can't be certain, the first church in our Movement to install an organ was probably in Midway, Ky., around 1850, where Dr. L. L. Pinkerton was the preacher. He stood ready to defend the practice when it was challenged by the likes of Benjamin Franklin. The organ continued to be adopted through the 1850's and 1860's especially in the more affluent urban churches, but the total number of instrumental churches at the close of the Civil War would be few, probably less than 50. They became far more numerous in the 1870's and 1880's. But through all these years the Movement did not divide over the question even though there was controversy and discussion, but no formal debates. There were "liberals" and "conservatives" on this question, just as with societies, the imported "pastor," and cooperation with other churches. But still no open splits. For a generation we had churches with organs and churches without organs, and *most* brethren did not pay much attention to the difference. A few agitators not only kept the issues alive, but were able eventually to use them in bringing about our first division around 1888.

The genius of the Movement from the outset was that no theological interpretations or opinions would be made tests of fellowship. The basis of unity was loyalty to Christ, not deductions and opinions from scripture. In all such opinions there would be liberty, even with congregations. One church could differ with another, for their oneness was in Jesus, not in uniformity of doctrine or practice. There could be "liberal" and "conservative" churches if need be, for they would still be one in Christ through faith and baptism. The first two or three generations of our people were faithful to these principles. We have since divided into numerous sects because we have betrayed our great heritage.

Even folk like the Free Methodists have practiced our own principles better than we. They too were threatened with division over instrumental music, but they resolved the issue by leaving each congregation free to make its own decision. Why can't we do the same? We become sectarians when we exalt our preference or our interpretation (or the way we handle scriptural silence) to the level of a clear and distinct law of God. *—the Editor*

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BOOK NOTES

Almost all the books we recommend in this column are inexpensive paperbacks. *Concise Dictionary of Religious Quotations* by William Neil at 7.95 is an exception. It makes for delightful, informative reading, with 2500 perceptive quotes gathered from a lifetime of study and from the great minds of history. William Barclay says of it, "Its unique quality is that at one and the same time it suits the desk, the armchair and the bedside."

Gifford H. Roux of Wood River, Il. writes that *The Way of Salvation* by K. C. Moser is all that we said it was, adding `It's deep enough for any scholar and simple enough for the babe in Christ." It brings home to you the meaning of the grace of God and that from an old-time Church of Christ minister. 3.75 postpaid.

For 3.20 we will send you *The Prophets Speak Again,* by Barbara Jurgensen, which really makes the prophets come alive for our time. It moves from "the prophet that was kidnapped" to "the fish that went manning." "My dreams are getting weirder all the time" is the chapter heading for Zechariah. You'll cotton to this one!

The Way It Was in Bible Times, by Merrill Gilbertson, tells you how everything was in Bible times, whether houses, education, cooking, clothes, customs at home, music, synagogue, daily life and work, holy days, money, distances, on and on. You step inside the biblical world. 3.25.

The Land of Jesus, a new book issued by Lutherans, is a pictorial narrative of 120 pages. There are over 100 large pictures, some in color, with narrative on how the various scenes tell the biblical story. This would make an attractive gift. 6.95.

To what sources other than the New Testament can we turn for information about Jesus and the early church? F. F. Bruce answers this clearly and interestingly in *Jesus and Christian Origins Outside the New Testament.* Did you know, for instance, that Jesus is referred to in the Koran? 3.70.

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